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ELY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

a report of the

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

1965



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Officers

Medical Officer of Health:

K.S. MAURICE-SMITH, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

D.J. GWYNN, M.A.P.H.I., Cert. R.S.H. and P.H.I.E.B.  
Inspector of Meat & Other Foods.

Additional Public Health Inspector:

N.D. GAYLER, M.A.P.H.I., Cert. P.H.I.E.B. (To 24th September, 1965)

A.P. SHAW, M.A.P.H.I., Dip. P.H.I.E.B. (From 1st November, 1965)

Clerk/Typist:

MRS. M. MAIN.



Etheldreda House,  
35, St. Mary's Street,  
ELY, Cambs.

TO:- The Chairman and Members,  
Ely Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen - I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1965:-

1. STATISTICS:

During 1965, the usual statistics have been kept and are available.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES:

(a) Ambulances:

Two Ambulances are stationed at Ely, both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council.

The Littleport St. John Ambulance continues to work under the agency agreement with the County Council. This vehicle, which serves the local area, and those areas adjoining when necessary, continues to be of the greatest value. It is manned and run by local St. John members.

Assistance is given on occasions by members of the Ely St. John Ambulance Division.

(b) Nursing and Clinic Arrangements:

Clinic arrangements are as for previous years. The District Nurses continue to give their willing and efficient services to all those requiring them. They greatly deserve the thanks of the Community for all that they do.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES (Contd.)

(c) Hospitals:

- (i) Tower Hospital for Chronic Sick.
- (ii) St. John's Hospital for Infectious Diseases and long-stay cases.
- (iii) The Grange Maternity Home.

These three Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

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3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

(a)

156 notifications of infectious diseases were received. The total being made up as follows:-

Measles.....	140
Erysipelas.....	1
Whooping Cough.....	1
Pneumonia.....	6
Scarlatina.....	7
Salmonella enteritis....	1
<hr/>	
Total.....	156
<hr/>	

(b)

Although 156 notifications of infectious disease have been received it must be emphasised that 140 of these were for measles, so that the incidence generally of infectious disease is very satisfactorily low. Epidemics of measles appear recently to occur every second year. It is fortunate that during the past twenty years measles generally, in the District, has been a very mild disease. Immunisation against measles appears to be not so very far away now.

3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Contd.)

(b) (Contd.)

It is highly satisfactory to be able to report the absence of any diphtheria in the District during the year. Every new baby must - repeat must - be immunized against this horrible disease, and today when it is possible to take advantage for most children of the triple antigen, giving protection against diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus a minimum of effort only is required of parents.

The only additional "must" is, of course, immunization against polio-myelitis.

Immunization can be carried out either by the family Doctor or at a County Council Clinic.

(c) Tuberculosis:

3 new cases were notified during the year. After making the necessary adjustments there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

<u>Respiratory:</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory:</u>
Females 28	6
Males 39	1

Compared with 1964, the total figure shows an increase of 3 cases.

4. CARAVAN SITES:

It will be seen from the figures given below that a decrease has taken place in the number of licenced sites having between 1 and 4 vans established on them. At the same time no applications were received for large residential sites.

This is an encouraging trend and indicates a lessening of the need for people to seek what is still considered to be a sub-standard form of accommodation. The discontinuance of eight site licences can be attributed to the tenants either purchasing their own property, or being re-housed by the Council in permanent dwellings.

The large sites, able to offer modern amenities and facilities, continue to attract residents and, with improvements steadily made in both layout of the site and quality of caravan offered, will no doubt remain over many years.

Complaints of site conditions or bad management are at an absolute minimum and it appears that the majority of caravan occupants are well satisfied.

Reference has been made in the past years to the problems of itinerant van dwellers. Only one incident involving their presence in the district occurred this year, and this did not directly concern the Department. Action was taken by the Police under a County Byelaw, with the result that nine caravans were removed from Sutton Gault for "occupying land within 300 yards of a dwelling house so as to cause injury, disturbance or annoyance to the inmates of such house".

The following figures record the number of licenced sites at the beginning and end of the year:-

Site Licences in force at 1.1.65

Multiple residential sites (over 5 vans)	6
Holiday sites	2
Single residential sites (1-4 vans)	<u>31</u>
Total (a)	39

New Licences issued during 1965

Single residential sites	Nil
Total (b)	39
Sites discontinued	<u>8</u>
Site Licences in force at 31.12.65	Total (c)

4. CARAVAN SITES (Contd.)

Over 150 caravan were being used for residential purposes during the year, the majority standing on multiple sites at Witchford and Littleport.

5. FACTORIES ACT 1961:

The following details give the prescribed particulars which are required by Section 153(1) of the Act.

There are no narrative comments needed, as the number of inspections made would not justify generalities. The greater part of duties under the Act are undertaken by the Factory Inspectorate.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	7	Nil	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities	33	8	1	Nil
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities (excluding out-workers premises).	1	Nil	Nil	Nil
Totals	41	8	1	Nil

5. FACTORIES ACT 1961 (Contd.)

2. Cases in which DEFECTS WERE FOUND:-

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecut- ions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Overcrowding (S.2.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Unreasonable temperature (S.3.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Ineffective drainage of floors(S.6.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences(S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	Nil	1	Nil
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to out-work)					
Total	1	1	Nil	1	Nil

3. There are no outworkers employed in the district.

## 6. FOOD CONTROL:

### a) Food premises

Routine inspections were made on 46 premises where food is handled, stored and sold, together with mobile food shops operating in the district.

A survey of the types of food businesses was made and classified as follows:-

BAKERS AND CONFECTIONERS	6
BUTCHERS	12
CAFES	4
FRIED/WET FISH MERCHANTS	3
GENERAL PROVISION STORES	21
GREENGROCER	1
GROCERS	19
HONEY BLENDER	1
POULTRY SLAUGHTERHOUSES	2
SLAUGHTERHOUSE	1
SWEET & ICE CREAM SHOPS	6
TOTAL	76

### b) Food Hygiene

Food Hygiene Regulations have now been in force for ten years. It might be assumed that, after such a period of time, every owner of a food business, and every person engaged in handling food, would know of their existence and meaning. Food businesses may still be operated in ignorance of the law and it is only by continued effort in the field of hygiene education that a desirable level of clean food handling can be attained.

The installation of equipment, and the modernisation of premises is not difficult. Specialist firms have produced a wide range of products which are readily adaptable in both large multiples and small village stores. There can be no excuse for badly maintained premises. The main problem concerns the proper use of available facilities by the individual food handler, and it is in this direction that the Public Health Inspector needs to concentrate his activity. This is but one example of the way in which your staff must show tact in personal contact, in order to establish a good relationship with the trade.

## 6. FOOD CONTROL (Contd.)

### b) Food Hygiene (Contd.)

Safeguarding food supplies, at all levels, is vitally important, and one despairs of the attitude so often taken that "what was good enough for father is good enough for me". A progressive policy has no room for these antiquated ideals but I fear it will be a long time before the 'good old days' will finally be forgotten.

One unusual problem during the year involved a wholesale vegetable merchant who was found to be washing carrots with water extracted from a polluted dyke. The particular operation could not be dealt with under Food Hygiene Regulations, but the Council felt that every effort should be made to secure the cessation of a practice which was a potential source of food poisoning. Considerable publicity was given to the matter at local and national press level, although this had not been pre-meditated. This, in itself, seriously affected the merchant's trade, and was probably instrumental in securing a satisfactory outcome. The operations were finally transferred to suitable premises, where it was possible to instal a purification plant to treat the wash water, and the operator agreed that this proved to be a better commercial proposition in addition to satisfying the wishes of the Council. As a result of the investigation it was decided to ask the Rural District Council Association to press for legislation to control the washing of vegetables.

### c) Ice Cream

While 61 premises are shown as being registered for the storage and sale of ice cream, only 45 are now being used for that purpose. There were no new applications for registration during the year. Again, it was not found possible to undertake a programme of sampling.

### d) Meat Inspection

Slaughtering of cattle was carried out regularly at the only private slaughterhouse at Sutton.

100% inspection was made, and carcases were stamped in accordance with the Regulations. No variations were made in the standard rate of charges for this service.

e) Milk

The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) Order, operating since April 1959, is still in force. This Order prohibits the retail sale of raw milk unless it carries the special designation "Untreated" under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1963.



6. FOOD CONTROL (Contd.)

d) Meat Inspection (Contd.)

Routine inspections were made of the slaughterhouse premises, and the owner continued to make minor improvements to the structure and carcase storage facilities.

The following Table gives details of carcase inspections and condemnations.

	Cattle excl. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	66	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
Number inspected	66	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
<u>Diseases other than</u> <u>Tuberculosis and</u> <u>Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcases condemned	Nil	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	3	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of numbers inspected affected with disease	4.53%	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>	Nil	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Cysticercosis only</u>	Nil	-	-	-	-	-

e) Milk

The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) Order, operating since April 1959, is still in force. This Order prohibits the retail sale of raw milk unless it carries the special designation "Tuberculin Tested" under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1960.

7. HOUSING:

a) Council Housing Programme

Permanent Houses

No. of dwellings completed during 1965	11
No. of dwellings under construction at 31.12.65	61
No. of dwellings provided under the Housing Acts to 31.12.65.	1621
No. of pre-war dwellings improved by the provision of standard amenities during 1965.	60
No. of pre-war dwellings under improvement at 31.12.65.	84
No. of pre-war houses improved since introduction of the scheme in 1958.	349

Temporary Houses

There is no temporary housing accommodation  
provided by the Council.

b) Private Enterprise Housing

Permanent Houses

No. of dwellings completed during 1965	86
No. of dwellings under construction at 31.12.65.	90
No. of dwellings completed since April 1945.	579

c) Subsidised Agricultural Housing

No. of dwellings completed during 1965	1
No. of dwellings completed since April 1945	* 42
No. of dwellings completed since commencement of scheme in 1938.	70

(\* This figure is included in the 579 shown at (b) above).

7. HOUSING (Contd.)

d) Improvement of Private Dwellings

Discretionary Grants

No. of dwellings improved or provided during 1965	9
Total of grants paid during 1965	£2606.
No. of dwellings improved since 1949	228
Total of grants paid since 1949	£58,370:8:8d.

Standard Grants

No. of dwellings improved during 1965	28
Total of grants paid during 1965	£4024.
No. of dwellings improved since 1959	290
Total of grants paid since 1959	£37,988:14:0d.

e) Slum Clearance

No. of Demolition and Closing Orders made, and undertakings accepted, during 1965.	18
No. of families re-housed by Council from unfit dwellings during 1965.	10

At the January meeting of the Housing Committee, instructions were received that a comprehensive report be prepared giving an indication of the number of unfit dwellings in the district that would require formal action under the Housing Act 1957. The programme, when formulated, would be phased over 4 years and was intended to give an indication of the need for future house building schemes undertaken by the Council.

This survey proved to be the largest single item of the Department's work for the first six months of the year, and was the first comprehensive survey undertaken by the Department during the past 20 years.

The first phase of the survey indicated that 495 properties would need to be the subject of more detailed examination, this figure accounting for 17% of the total number of privately owned dwellings in the district. On completion of the detailed inspections, 113 properties were considered to be in need of formal action during the 4 years ending in 1969.

7. HOUSING (Contd.)

e) Slum Clearance (Contd.)

By the time the report was received by the Council, only 3 months of the year remained in which action could be taken, and it is not possible, at this stage, to assess the effect of this measure.

It is intended to produce an annual review of the situation concerning slum clearance. A clearer picture should then emerge as to the extent to which slum clearance is progressing and the reception given by various owners to improvement proposals.

We do not face problems that are known to exist in large towns and housing requirements are less acute in a rural community. Nevertheless, everyone is entitled to live in a property of reasonable standards and to enjoy the amenities that public opinion in an affluent society demands. The fact that improvement grants continue to attract a reasonable number of applicants is proof enough of rising standards, and it is good to record that the improvement of older property is well in excess of the rate of condemnations.

f) General

At times I wonder if many of our older folk would be happier if they were provided with showers, rather than the traditional baths, with all the accompanying strains of climbing in and out of such baths. An added risk is, of course, the possibility of fainting occurring when in the bath.

A warm shower, which can be enjoyed either standing or else sitting on a wooden stool seems to me to be less dangerous and worrying for an elderly person.

In every community there are members of the younger generation who by reason of chronic disease or injury are partially handicapped in living under normal conditions. These persons may be capable of earning a living but they need a specially designed bungalow with such features as the replacement of steps by ramps, doorways wide enough to take an invalid chair, sinks, wash-basins, shelves set at a suitable height from the ground, and so on.

7. HOUSING (Contd.)

f) General (Contd.)

I am sure an estimate of the number of such bungalows which could be used, could be obtained. Many local authorities have provided such bungalows and although the demand happily is small, the amenities provided are highly appreciated by those concerned.

I would like to think that the Council would consider this problem in the not too distant future.

8. OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES:

Applications for registration of premises were received from 12 occupiers during the year, mainly as a result of reminders from the Department. It was not possible to make any intensive inspections due to the pressure of other work throughout the district and the limited staff available. Some progress was made towards the end of the year by ensuring that one Inspector's time was fully devoted to inspections under the Act. There can, however, be no guarantee that such a pattern of inspection will be possible in the future.

During the latter months of the year, a total of 66 out of 85 premises registered received an inspection, and 46 informal notices were served on the occupiers of premises not complying in certain respects. No formal action has been found necessary at this early stage and few people have questioned the wisdom of the requirements of the Act. In fact, the only complaint about the severity of a section has been concerning the provision of a constant supply of hot water instead of an intermittent supply by means of a kettle, and this complaint has only been voiced on one or two occasions.

Generally, conditions have been quite reasonable, few premises falling very far below standard, and almost a third of the premises visited have been up to standard.

The majority of the informal notices served on the remaining two-thirds of the premises visited have been concerned with the provision of thermometers, abstracts of the Act, and inadequately stocked first aid boxes. A few premises had insufficient heating appliances and, in addition, one office had no washing facilities, poor sanitary accommodation, as well as bad natural and artificial light. The company concerned in the latter case were, however, very enthusiastic about improving the conditions, and within three weeks their head office had presented plans and estimates for the renovation of the property. Work started on the repairs necessary to bring the premises into compliance with the Act at the end of December.

8. OFFICES SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES (Contd.)

Lighting conditions in premises were a little difficult to assimilate in the absence of any official recommendation. First impressions at many premises were that lighting was satisfactory, but the use of a Photometer and the Illuminating Engineering Society code proved the light to be, in fact, unsatisfactory by the Illuminating Engineers standard.

Few cases of a very bad lighting standard were met, though the old established shop or office was invariably more poorly lit than the modern one, both from the natural and artificial points of view.

As stated before the absence of any standards made under the Act meant that the Illuminating Engineering Society code was the only standard available and, as the level of light laid down in this code seemed quite reasonable, in cases of unsatisfactory lighting the occupiers were urged to comply with these standards. No cases of excessive glare were encountered during the year.

9. REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL:

For the particular year under review this subject could easily command a report on its own. Many changes and additions were made, and only the most important items have been summarised in the following paragraphs.

The first month saw the commencement of the weekly collection service, this being undertaken by the use of a Dennis Paxit II, a Bedford Sideloader, and the newly added Dennis Paxit IIIA. It is gratifying to record that the whole operation went smoothly right from the start, and many appreciative comments were made on this step towards better hygiene.

Parallel to this improvement was the start on tip control using a Chaseside 700 Loadmaster. This machine competently dealt with the compaction and covering of all refuse tipped both at Littleport and Haddenham. It was not, however, possible to achieve the desired standards of full control. For a period of twenty years refuse disposal had been accomplished by crude tipping over a face as deep as 15 feet, and the conditions produced by this method left no opportunity to operate adequately. A 'tidying-up' process, incorporating adaptions of the Ministry recommendations, was evolved. This proved to be satisfactory as far as was possible within the limitations imposed by former methods.

## 9. REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL (Contd.)

The need for more extensive tipping facilities had been discussed by the Council during the previous year, and it had been agreed that an old river bed at Burnt Fen, Littleport, would make an admirable area for refuse disposal. Negotiations were commenced with the Great Ouse River Authority and, following site meetings and discussions with the Authority's technical officers and other interested parties, it seemed as though a new tip could be established. But, at the last minute, all efforts were brought to nothing when the River Authority decided against the Council's proposals, and negotiations were called off.

The only suitable alternative was a large gault pit at Stretham which, while providing at least 15 years tipping life, would mean a complete revision of collection schedules and an expensive scheme of preparation. It was to this area that the Council was obliged to set its sights at the end of the year.

In order to accommodate new vehicles, a larger garage was erected at Portley Hill, and sanitary facilities were incorporated for the benefit of the manual staff. Tanks were also installed for the bulk supply of fuel and a considerable saving on the running cost of the vehicles was achieved.

One extra member was added to the loading staff. This eased the situation at holiday times, and during periods of sickness, and no temporary staff had to be engaged.

During the latter part of the year it became apparent that the Bedford Sideloader was rapidly deteriorating and, knowing that a twelve month delivery period could be anticipated on a new vehicle, an order was placed for a further Dennis Paxit IIIA collector. This addition to the fleet should give the Council a lengthy breathing space before any replacements are needed, and the standardisation of vehicle types greatly assists in maintenance and spares arrangements.

Amid all technical difficulties encountered during the year, the crews have placidly and conscientiously carried out their duties. It is not always appreciated that, whatever the weather, the men are out day after day. The results of their labours affect every household in the district every week, and it is a great credit to them that complaints can be counted in one hand. When it is realised that nearly a quarter of a million dustbins are emptied each year one sees the importance of their work. In this district it costs  $11\frac{1}{2}$ d to empty a dustbin, and this includes not only collection at the house, but transporting and disposal charges. Could any other service be purchased so cheaply?

## 10. RODENT AND PEST CONTROL:

The routine work of visiting infested premises continued steadily. No serious infestations were recorded and it was noted that the pattern of complaints did not vary considerably from the previous year. More attention was given to refuse tips, sewage works and watercourses by way of preventive, rather than curative, treatment. In this respect control methods have been very effective and there can be no cause for complaint regarding buildings and land owned, or operated, by the Council.

The work of the rodent operator has not been made easier in other directions, however. Many authorities are finding that their districts are being spoilt by the dumping of assorted rubbish. Apart from insult to the aesthetic, ready made breeding grounds for vermin and insect pests are established. Despite provision of frequent refuse collection services, and litter bins, there exists a class of individual who considers it to be his undeniable right to throw his waste away as and where it pleases him. Investigation might well show that this attitude of mind is an insidious offshoot of the Welfare State.

A summary of visits and treatments follows:-

### (i) Rats and Mice

Complaints received:		180
Inspections:	Dwelling houses	369*
	Business premises	125*
Treatments of:	Dwelling houses	272*
	Business premises	25*
Surveys and treatments of:	Refuse tips	160
	Sewage plants	100
	Watercourses	120

### (ii) Other Pests

Complaints received:		52
Inspections:	Dwelling houses	93*
	Business premises	24*
Treatments of:	Dwelling houses	75*
	Business premises	14*
Surveys and treatments of:	Refuse tips	65
	Sewage plants	4
	Watercourses	7

(\* These figures include secondary visits and follow-up treatments).

11. SEWAGE:

a) Sewage Schemes

The Council may be justly proud of the extensive works that have now been carried out in providing main drainage facilities throughout the district.

At the beginning of the year, the following parishes had sewers available for the majority of the inhabitants:

LITTLEPORT  
SUTTON  
STRETHAM  
MEPAL  
WITCHAM  
WITCHFORD

The following details apply to contracts in progress during 1965:

COVENEY:

Tender documents were sought at the beginning of the year and construction works commenced in May. Satisfactory progress was maintained during the summer months and, by the end of October, house connections were being laid.

LITTLE DOWNHAM:

This scheme was already in hand at the beginning of the year and satisfactory progress was maintained. House connections were being made at the end of the year and it was then expected that the scheme would become operative early in 1966.

HADDENHAM:

This scheme was also progressing at the beginning of the year and was almost ready to take into commission at the end of December. This has been the largest scheme undertaken in the district in post-war years.

WILBURTON:

Following Ministry approval for this scheme, contract documents were prepared during February, and the work was finally ready for tendering in September. The start of actual works was scheduled for the beginning of 1966.

## 11. SEWAGE (Contd.)

### a) Sewage Schemes (Contd.)

In addition to the main schemes mentioned above, minor extensions or improvements to existing systems were also in hand.

#### LITTLEPORT:

Extensions of the sewage treatment works had been proposed and the Consultant Engineers reported on the difficult conditions involved in ground work.

Preparation was made for the re-laying of certain sections of the sewers in this parish and, in order to ascertain the extent of defects causing the infiltration of surface water, Seer T.V. Service Limited were employed to carry out closed circuit television inspection. The accurate location of defective sections and the photographs produced by this method proved to be a great asset.

#### SUTTON:

The small extension to serve the 8 properties known as Bow Cottages, Station Road, was completed during March.

Towards the end of the year an investigation of the circumstances existing at Rosemary Lane and The America was undertaken. No definite decision had been taken by the end of the year as to whether an extension to serve this area would be a practicable proposition.

#### WITCHAM AND WITCHFORD:

Preliminary works were put in hand for the provision of new sludge drying beds at the sewage disposal works serving these 2 parishes.

With the completion or near completion of the major schemes, it was proposed that consideration be given in the near future to the preparation of schemes for the smaller isolated units of population. These proposals would cover:

ALDRETH  
LITTLE THETFORD  
WENTWORTH  
PYMORE  
WARDY HILL  
BLACK HORSE DROVE

## 11. SEWAGE (Contd.)

### a) Sewage Schemes (Contd.).

In respect of new sewerage schemes the Council operates Section 12 of the Public Health Act 1961 (Contribution to cost of sewerage highway), and for this purpose your inspectors have carried out surveys to ascertain the owners of land affected.

### b) Sewage Samples

The Engineer & Surveyor made reference to samples taken of the effluent from various sewage works as follows:

#### Annual Review of Sewage Effluent Samples - Sewage Purification Works

In a letter dated 7th July, 1965, Dr. Clay, the Pollution Prevention Officer of the Great Ouse River Authority, refers to the above samples at the Annual Review as hereunder:

Littleport Sewage Purification Works - During the year ended 31st March, 1965, two samples of sewage effluent were taken, one being satisfactory by the Royal Commission standard and the other being unsatisfactory. It is appreciated that a scheme of extensions has been prepared for these works to relieve the over-loading and that you are maintaining the works in as good a condition as possible until this work is carried out.

Stretham Sewage Purification Works - Only one sample of effluent from these works was analysed during the year; this was within the consent standard for B.O.D. and just slightly over the top limit for suspended solids. These works appear to have settled down quite well.

Witcham Sewage Purification Works - It is pleasing to note that the two samples taken from these works were within the consent standard.

Witchford Sewage Purification Works - Of the two samples taken during the year, one was satisfactory and the other at 26 p.p.m. B.O.D. was over the consent figure; the suspended solids at 31 p.p.m. were just above the upper limit of 30. During this period there has been an increase of sewage to the works due to the sewerage of the major part of the village.

The sample from Witchford Purification Works was taken prior to repairs in renewal of the distributor packing glands when leaking through the worn packing was taking place.

11. SEWAGE (Contd.)

c) General

In a scattered rural community it is obviously uneconomic to provide main sewerage systems which would enable every house to be connected. There still remains therefore the problem of dealing with the small private disposal unit. As the out-lying properties become modernised, proper septic tank drainage is usually installed, and arrangements have to be made for an emptying service. During the year the Council gave consideration to the best method of dealing with this matter and felt that the purchase of their own cesspool emptying equipment was not necessary, as private contractors were able to offer a reasonable service. It was, however, decided that where it was not possible for a property to be connected to a sewer the occupant would be given the benefit of a free emptying of the cesspool once in 2 years.

12. WATER SUPPLY:

(For the following information I am indebted to Mr. F.W. Sanders, Engineer to the Ely, Mildenhall and Newmarket Water Board).

"1965 has been the second year in succession when it has been possible to maintain the supply without recourse to restrictions on the use of hose pipes. The improvements the Board has made during the short time it has been in being have played their part, but it is unlikely that the supply would have been maintained if it had not been for rainfall in the spring and summer which had the effect of reducing the demand at a time when it usually reaches a peak. It is necessary to repeat again that it will not be until the Woodditton and Beck Row schemes are completed that it will always be possible to maintain an unrestricted supply. Progress has been made on these schemes and work is going on but neither will be ready for the spring of 1966 although water will almost certainly be available from the Woodditton scheme by the autumn.

The supply to the Ely Rural District was assisted again at various times by pumping water from Ely to Witchford, Wentworth and Sutton.

The output of this station increased during the year because another pump was installed to supply the villages of Beck Row and Holmsey Green.

WATER SUPPLY (Contd.)

The Beck Row station continued to give a satisfactory supply and in spite of previous dry years the rest level of the water in the bores was only a foot or so below normal and, in fact, was never more than 9 feet below ground level.

The water is hard, but not excessively so. The Board considered a report on possible softening during the year but came to the conclusion that the matter should be left at least until more progress has been made on the heavy programme of expenditure on other capital works.

It is the practice to send samples of untreated water from each borehole once a month for bacteriological examination and once a year for chemical analysis.

Fluoridation has not been undertaken by the Board. Although there is no technical difficulty in applying fluoride to the water it may be a little more than average cost owing to the large number of small plants to be installed and maintained. The Board awaits a unanimous decision of all the health authorities (County Councils) in the area before applying fluoride, as it is generally impossible to restrict the output of any source to any particular county."

Despite increased support for the fluoridation of the water supply the Council, by a small majority, still adhere to the previous decision not to support the proposals.

It may not be appreciated how many chemicals are used in making water fit for drinking purposes. In some countries and areas fluoride is only one of the many chemicals used. Extensive and prolonged studies of the use of fluoride-treated water have been carried out in many parts of the world and subjected to the most critical consideration and analysis. Questions of morbidity and mortality rates have been examined from pathological, industrial and statistical points of view, and I have no doubt whatsoever that these studies prove conclusively that the drinking of water containing fluoride in the prescribed quantity has no ill-effect on the health or lives of those who drink water so treated.

The children of today are the adults of tomorrow, and one feels that our generation must accept the responsibility of safeguarding the teeth of these children, as faulty dentition must affect directly and indirectly the general health and efficiency of each individual.

12. WATER SUPPLY (Contd.)

A typical analysis of the supply to this district is reproduced below.

Beck Row Pumping Station

Sample of water received on 12th October, 1965, from the Ely, Mildenhall and Newmarket Water Board.

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This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance, neutral in reaction and free from metals. The hardness is predominantly carbonate or "temporary" in character due to calcium bicarbonate. The content of mineral and saline constituents is not excessive.

The water is of a high standard of organic quality.

These results indicate, from the aspect of the chemical and mineral analysis, a pure and wholesome water suitable for public supply purposes.

pH	7.2
Chloride	37 Mg/L
Ammonia (free & saline)	absent
Ammonia (albuminoid)	0.02 Mg/L
Nitrate	7.1 Mg/L
Nitrite	absent
Poisonous Metals	absent
Fluoride	less than .1 Mg/L
Permanent hardness	95
Temporary hardness	255
Total hardness	350

### 13. WATERCOURSES AND SEWER DYKES:

In the previous Annual Report reference was made to the arrangements with the various Internal Drainage Boards for assistance in the maintenance of awarded watercourses and sewer dykes. The Internal Drainage Boards have suffered the consequences of labour shortage and, except for an annual weed cutting programme in the four public drains at Streatham, no definite contracts were arranged during the year. Routine maintenance and cleansing had to be kept to an absolute minimum and it has to be recorded that only "first aid" measures were adopted.

While it would be of considerable help to employ mechanical means of roding, many of the dykes required to be maintained by the District Council are not readily adaptable to machinery. The preliminary negotiations that would be required with owners on either side of the dykes could certainly not be undertaken by existing staff. It will therefore be necessary to continue the use of hand labour for the time being.

During the year complaints were received of pollution by fuel oil in The Brook watercourse at Sutton. Despite intensive investigation of this matter, no satisfactory conclusion had been reached at the end of the year, and it was not possible to prove that any one person was responsible for the increase of this polluting material. It is to be hoped that the developers of the land alongside the watercourse will eventually pipe a further section but this, of course, will not cure the pollution.

MISCELLANEOUS:a) Animal Boarding Establishments.

Three premises are licenced under the 1963 Act. Annual inspections were made and the premises found to be of satisfactory standard.

b) Clean Air Act.

No problems were encountered during the year which required action of a formal nature.

Advice was given on chimney heights, and suitable location, to developers of a light industrial site where incinerations were being installed.

c) Game Dealers.

There are two persons licenced by the Council to deal in game.

d) Petroleum Regulations.

There were 108 annual licences issued at the beginning of the year. New installations were subjected to standard pressure tests, all with satisfactory results. Revenue from licence fees amounted to £71.0.0d.

e) Schools

I have no comment to make.

f) Street Naming and Numbering.

With continued development taking place, several schemes of new numbering, or re-numbering, were made. Further name boards were provided to give clearer indication of roads in various parishes.

15. GENERAL DISTRICT INSPECTION:

HOUSING ACTS

Inspection of dwelling houses	258
Improvement Grant inspections	109
Improvement Grant enquiries	76
Inspection of demolition works	14
Visits in connection with re-housing	35
General surveys	117
	609

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Drainage	304
Pest control	21
Animal nuisances	14
Offensive accumulations	33
Refuse collection and disposal	160
Water supply	7
General	27
	566

FOOD & DRUGS ACT

Bakehouses	3
Cafes, canteens	3
Butchers	8
Hotels and Public Houses	8
General food premises	24
Meat inspection	49
	95

CARAVAN SITES ACT

Site inspections	109
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OFFICES SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES

Registration queries	28
Inspections	66
	94

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Visits to private houses	11
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FACTORIES

Inspections	8
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15. GENERAL DISTRICT INSPECTION (Contd.)

PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

Licencing enquiries	13
Pressure testing	4

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17

OTHER VISITS

Street naming and numbering	21
Animal Boarding Establishments	3
Sundry	38

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62

Total Inspections - 1965

1571

16. GENERAL COMMENTS:

The year under review has seen, as in the previous year, the fullest extension of the Public Health Department; and your Public Health Inspectors have had to make every effort to carry out their many duties. Even then increasing responsibilities with no increase in available time has resulted in our inability to develop some aspects of public health work in the way we would have wished. However, by the utilization of all the time available it has been possible to increase the efficiency and scope of the Department.

I must draw the Council's attention to the zeal and diligence of your Inspectors, to whom indeed the whole community owes a big debt of gratitude.

Each year sees increasing responsibilities thrust on the Department and this year shows no change in this respect.

During the year the following new legislation and circulars have been received which affect the work of the Department:-

Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964.

Meat Inspection (Amendment) Regs. 1965.

O.S.R. - Information for Employees Regs. 1965.

Circular 11/65 - Slum Clearance.

Circular 15/65 - Washing Facilities in  
Public Conveniences.

Circular 17/65 - Twin Unit Caravans.

17. PERSONAL:

My illness in the earlier part of the year has, I regret, delayed this report somewhat.

I wish to thank the members of the Council for their sympathy and good wishes while I was in Hospital.

Fortunately, I was able to be taken care of in the Royal Air Force Hospital, Ely, and I am grateful for the skill and many kindnesses shown to me by the Medical Officers and Nursing Staff while I was under their care.

17. PERSONAL (Contd.)

It was particularly fortunate that it was possible for me to enter that Hospital, as throughout I was able to keep in touch with Council affairs either by personal visits by my colleagues or by telephone.

To Mr. Gwynn and Mr. Gayler I record my very grateful thanks for their assistance and co-operation, so willingly given to me, and to Mr. Gwynn for his assistance in the completion of this Report.

I willingly extend my warmest thanks also to the Clerk - Mr. J.E. Ward; the Deputy Clerk - Mr. W. Parr; the Engineer & Surveyor - Mr. Clifford Jones, for giving me their advice, assistance and encouragement on the many occasions I have asked them.

I have the honour to be,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

K.S. MAURICE-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,  
Ely Rural District Council.

October 1966.

Public Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
11, Lynn Road,  
ELY, Cambs.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In January 1966 the usual request for this Annual Report was received from the Ministry. As before, an earnest start was made on revision and review in an attempt to produce the report early in the year and thus to make the figures and comments seem more relevant and up-to-date. That the final product is nearly a year behindhand is to be regretted, but serves to reflect the fact that a Public Health Inspector is essentially an 'outdoor type' and is reluctant to spend more time than is necessary on the written word. It is an essential part of your Inspectors' activity to keep a daily record of visits and action taken and, in addition, monthly reports have to be drafted, duplicated and submitted to Council and Committee meetings. One wonders how a satisfactory level of personal contact can be maintained while paper-work continues to demand so much time.

There is a rapidly growing movement towards more efficiency by the use of computerised and mechanised systems. That these can be of value in a large administration is now beyond doubt, but it would be extremely difficult to organise a small department around such expensive aids, and it will be many decades, if ever, before a robot can adequately cope with the personal problems and foibles which the daily routine of a Public Health Inspector brings forth.

The foregoing report gives an indication of the far reaching activities of the Department, and a record of facts relating to the district. It does not and, indeed, cannot do more than present the framework, and this is where I can only give a personal assurance that, behind the scenes, much work goes on unnoticed - known only to those who have sought our assistance or advice.

The common denominator of all the variety of duties is the education towards improving environmental hygiene. Progress cannot be stemmed. New methods and new ideas are being formulated all the time and the greatest difficulty is to present them in such a way that the layman can grasp them and see that they are of sound reasoning. The greatest prejudice against improvements is that the reasons for them are not clearly seen and, in such circumstances, there is a tendency to fall back on the age old remedy of scorning things we do not understand. "What was good enough for father, is good enough for me". That phrase either indicates apathy, or an excuse for not spending money. This is particularly noticeable in the field of food hygiene, and the main report carries comment on the subject. Slowly, but surely, we hope our efforts will bear fruit.

Unlike a manufacturing industry we cannot point to a definite end product, and a community service is hard to measure in monetary terms. It is necessary to view such work in the light of overall benefit to the good health of the people. We do not produce a balance sheet showing a cash profit, but we can point towards an invested capital of better health, good houses, clean food and a purer environment which pays a large dividend to the public generally.

A red letter day occurred on 6th December when we moved into new accommodation at the Council Offices. The benefit of enlarged working space, and better facilities, coupled with easier contact with fellow officers, and more congenial surroundings for the reception of members of the public, has been greatly appreciated.

Once again, I must express my appreciation to my colleagues. In particular, to Dr. Maurice-Smith for his encouragement, to my assistant, Mr. Gayler, and to Mrs. Main, who has kept our paper jungle in some semblance of order. It was with regret that I saw Mr. Gayler take his leave of us in September, as he was a reliable and painstaking officer, who had been well received in the district. His successor, Mr. Shaw, quickly settled to his post and was busily involving himself in the life of the community at the end of the year. My thanks to the Chairmen of Council and Committees for holding the rope in sufficiently for me to avoid any fatalities, and for their earnest attention to matters within the province of the Department.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

D.J. GWYNN,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

October 1966.

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